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THE JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY

VOL. XLIX, NO. 14: JULY 3, 1952

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THE JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY

FOUNDED BY FREDERICK J. E. WOODBRIDGE AND WENDELL T. BUSH

EDITORS: Herbert W. Schneider, John H. Randall, Jr., Ernest Nagel.

MANAGING EDITOR: Emerson Buchanan.

Communications to the editors should be addressed to the Managing Editor, 515 West 116th Street, New York 27, N. Y. Subscriptions and advertisements should be sent to THE JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY, Prince and Lemon Streets, Lancaster, Pa., or 515 West 116th Street, New York 27, N. Y. The annual subscription price (twenty-six numbers) is $5.25. The price of single numbers is 35 cents, double numbers, 60 cents.

THE JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY is owned by the Journal of Philosophy, Inc., and published fortnightly at Prince and Lemon Sts., Lancaster, Pa. Editorial Office: 515 West 116th St., New York 27, N. Y. President, Ernest Nagel; Vice President, Herbert W. Schneider; Treasurer, Frederick A. Dewey; Secretary, Iris Wilder Dean.

Entered as second class matter, March 18, 1921, at the Post Office at Lancaster, Pa., under Act of Congress of March 3, 1879.

Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in paragraph (d-2), section 34.40, P. L. & R. of 1948, authorized March 11, 1952.

Publishers: G. E. STECHERT & Co., New York - ATLAS PUBL. & DISTR. Co., Ltd., London - HERMANN & Cie., Paris - NICOLA ZANICHELLI, Bologna - H. BOUVIER & C., BONN a/Rh - EDITORIAL HERDER, Barcelona - F. MACHADO & Cia, Porto - FRIEDRICH KILIAN'S NACHFOLGER, Budapest - F. ROUGE & Cie., Lausanne - THE MARUZEN COMPANY, Tokyo.

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VOLUME XLIX, No. 14 JULY 3, 1952

THE JOURNAL OF PHILOSOPHY

TENDENCY: THE ONTOLOGICAL GROUND OF ETHICS[1]

METAPHYSICS is commonly regarded as a chaos of abstract speculations quite remote from the immediate data of concrete experience. Hence the most influential objection now raised against it: that its concepts and theorems, having no empirical reference, are unverifiable and therefore meaningless.

As a matter of fact, it provides us with the only possible instruments by which we may hope to grasp the immediate data of experience in their full concreteness. Of all the philosophical disciplines it is the most eminently empirical, and closest to the brute facts as they are actually given. Not only do its basic concepts and theorems refer to evident data of experience, not only are they directly verifiable and meaningful, but without unambiguous reference to these foundational meanings the basic concepts and theorems of all other disciplines lapse into vagueness, unintelligibility, and meaninglessness.

These are strong assertions. Nevertheless they are true. To manifest their truth it would be necessary to examine the basic concepts of physical science such as energy, change, and quantity, those of the sciences of man such as rationality, communication, purpose, etc., and those like truth, induction, validity, and beauty which underlie the subordinate philosophical disciplines of epistemology, logic, and aesthetics. Time is not now available for this formidable task—even if we restricted it to the philosophical disciplines. I shall have to pass over other illustrations to focus our attention on the discipline of ethics.

This paper will fall into three parts: (1) a brief indication of certain obscurities and confusions in recent attempts to clarify the meanings of basic moral concepts; (2) an ontological analysis of the existential category of *active* tendency; and (3) an indication of the way in which the results of such an analysis may shed light on certain major issues of moral debate.

1. Foundational Confusion and Reductionism in Recent Ethical Theory

Modern moral debate is dominated by three influential schools of thought: naturalism or utilitarianism, deontological intuition-

[1] Read at the third annual meeting of the Metaphysical Society of America at Yale University, March 22, 1952.

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ism, and the non-cognitive, emotive theory. The pattern of debate between these schools has become more and more stereotyped. Each school is strong in pointing out the difficulties of other positions but weak in defending its own. Recent observers have suggested the need for a closer study of the concrete phenomena of moral experience, and for broader concepts capable of doing justice to these rich and complex data.[2] What each school sees is no doubt true, but none seems as yet to have penetrated to those foundational ontological structures which lie at the root of moral phenomena, and with reference to which the diverse subordinate phases focused by different points of view may be fitted together into a meaningful and non-exclusive whole.

It is most significant that many thinkers of divergent schools agree that basic moral categories such as goodness, so far as they can be defined at all, must be identified with fixed, determinate *qualities* or *properties* of some kind. But this assumption seems to lead only to reductionism, eclectic pluralism, or the dubious doctrine of indefinability. Can it be that a more basic existential category is being forgotten and ignored?

Let us select two pairs of related concepts, the ought and the good, existence and value, which are worthy of a brief glance. No recent school seems to have been able to focus the relation which holds the members of each pair together. Hence one must be reduced to the other, or the two must be separated by a yawning chasm with paradoxical results in each case which have been often emphasized. Either reductionism or disintegration. This is the price we pay for a neglect of the concrete data and those ontological concepts by which alone they may be coherently understood.

Thus if we attempt to reduce oughtness to the good conceived as a hedonic quality, difficulties arise concerning the intrinsic goodness of virtuous acts, and that peculiar binding power which the ought exerts upon the individual agent. On the other hand, if we separate the ought from factual value as two insular essences totally divorced from each other, we are forced to say that what we ought to do is not good, and the good is not what we ought to do. If they have nothing in common, how then can we weigh them against one another and compare them, as we must do in any serious process of deliberation? Moral law is left with no factual foundation whatsoever, and moral justification seems meaningless.

In the case of goodness and existence, as they are now ordinarily conceived, we are confronted with a similar dilemma. If

[2] W. K. Frankena, "Main Trends in Moral Philosophy at Mid-Century," *Philosophical Review*, Vol. LX (Jan. 1951), p. 50.

goodness is reduced to existence in the sense of *finished fact*, then what is, is right, and ethics in general disappears. On the other hand, if we follow Kant and his influential followers in radically separating the two, value is left without any ground, and collapses into a human construction, or if we are consistent, into non-being.

We may seek a refuge in the notion of indefinability or ineffability. But granted that this notion can be freed from contradiction, it can offer no refuge for anyone who still conceives of ethics as an intelligible discipline. A supposed discipline whose basic concepts are ineffable and uncharacterizable, cannot be anything but vague and ambiguous. It will be a house built on rotten foundations.

If metaphysics is not judged *a priori* to be impossible, there may be an escape from these dilemmas. A neglect of the metaphysics of ethics is common to the modern schools. Nowhere is moral analysis brought into any disciplined relation with a critical analysis of being. I shall now attempt to suggest the outlines of such an analysis. For the most part I shall follow patterns of thought already developed in the great classics of realistic ontology. But here and there I shall introduce modifications and corrections which, I believe, are essential for the purpose in hand. After concluding this ontological sketch, I shall try to show how it may shed light on problems of current ethical controversy, and how it may enable us to understand that existential unity which embraces the vast sea of diverse values without reducing any one.

2. Active Tendency as the Ontological Ground of Value

The theories of any responsible noetic discipline capable of inspiring the respect of careful investigators must be confirmed by empirical data. Otherwise we have only idle speculation, not science. If metaphysics is to be revived and pursued once more as a science, we must first show that there are data not belonging to the restricted sciences, *metaphysical protocols*. There are such protocols, and it is of the first importance that all of us who are interested in the survival of philosophy should reflect on this, and emphasize it in our teaching and writing. The most basic of these is *being*, the proper object of metaphysics as an empirical discipline. In what sense is this a brute datum, and how is it to be distinguished from the data of the other empirical sciences?

A brute datum of science has at least three definable characteristics. (1) It must be thrust before the cognitive faculties with an external constraint which rules out subjective inference and interpretation. (2) To have any confirming power, it must

be structuralized; no intelligible theory can be verified by an ineffable datum, if there is any such thing. (3) It must be accessible to different observers at different times working under somewhat divergent conditions. Do existential data meet these evidential criteria?

(1) The *being* of something now before me calls forth a *categorical* assent. I may not be sure just *what* it is, but *that* it is, is indubitable. It is highly improbable that any man has ever been able to doubt his own existence while consciously existing in an enveloping world of actual entities. (2) These existential data are structuralized. Among the more evident of these structures is that of existential plurality, both in space and in time. As we shall see, active tendency and dependency are in certain cases given with a high degree of clarity and cognitive constraint. (3) Without these data, there would be no human experience at all. Hence they are accessible *always*, to *any* human observer, under *all* conditions in which any observation is possible. We must, therefore, conclude that these are immediate data with a high degree of confirming power. But are they not covered by other disciplines?

Here we must note three striking characteristics which sharply distinguish them from the data of the restricted sciences. They are pervasive, non-quantitative, and very rich in scope. Scientific data, on the other hand, are restricted, primarily quantitative, and abstract. In trying to grasp the determining characteristics of philosophic data, special instruments and machines will not help us. These data are presented to the scientist in the laboratory, and when he is walking home on the street. Measuring techniques are absolutely useless, for these inescapable, primordial data include much more than quantity. What method then shall we use?

One alone is possible—the method of phenomenological description. We must return to concrete experience itself, examine it carefully, separate what is incidental and transitory from the pervasive ontological data, and then use our reason to describe these data as they are given, refraining from all inference and interpretation. Only by the use of this method will we have structuralized evidence capable of verifying our explanatory theories. Only then will a philosophical discipline be possible. Phenomenology and metaphysics go together. When men lose interest in the primordial data of everyday experience, metaphysics dies. Philosophy disintegrates into a chaos of partial abstractions, and finally into linguistic analysis. When men return to the concrete, and begin to wonder at its obscure depths and its rich profusion of qualitative structure, as in present-day

Europe, metaphysics revives. If it is to live again in our own tradition, we must cultivate the discipline of phenomenology. This is a first priority. Before we speculate—let us first describe!

Let me give as an example an important discovery made in the past. Plurality is a primordial, pervasive datum of experience. Thus here and now as I look around me, I find a voluminous *multiplicity* of divergent items, each marked off by something distinguishing it from the rest, geometric form, color pattern, and sound. This datum of existential *multiplicity* is indubitable. Even the most rigid monist must grant this in some sense as an original datum, no matter how much he is inclined to discount it because of his *a priori* acceptance of some explanatory theory. But let us postpone explanation for a moment, while we notice another important fact. These multiple items of my experience are also pervaded by something else which they seem to share in common. They all *exist*. In spite of their mutual exclusiveness, one exists as much as another. In this, each is similar to all the rest. All this is obvious, one may say. I believe that it is.

But it is also irreconcilable with the atomistic ontology of Lord Russell—and Hume, an *a priori* metaphysical assumption, never defended by reference to concrete evidence, but rather insinuated by a deceptive use of the term *empiricism*. This theory assumes that reality is composed of simple atomic units, into which we can analyze any existent entity. But the phenomenological datum of *existent multiplicity*, as we may call it, is absolutely incompatible with any such theory. How can a *simple* entity be both similar and distinct from the very same entities? It cannot be. In order to explain this fact, we must infer an extraordinary ontological composition in the structure of even the most simple unit or impression.

It must have something in it, traditionally called *essence*, in virtue of which it is different from others, and something really distinct called *existence*, in virtue of which it is similar to them. Here is an ontological theory which can be verified by phenomenological data available to anyone. But what are these principles, essences and existence, which enter into the composition of any member of an actual set? How do they differ from each other? In our western tradition, essentialist trends have been predominant.

This mode of thought is pluralistic. Every object is analyzed into separate structural elements. The static order (the world at a moment) is viewed as a set of fixed, simple units, ideas, impressions, or atoms incidentally ordered by external relations which do not affect their inner core of determination. The dynamic

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order is similarly analyzed into a discontinuous succession of essences, each of which first appears and then disappears without trace. Essences do not act or tend to anything beyond. Hence potency and causal efficacy are minimized, in spite of the evident facts of experience. Essences can be noted as they come. They cannot be explained. The law of sufficient reason is discounted or denied. There is nothing *there* but finished facts or essences. Some vanish into nothing. Others emerge from nothing. So what? This *fact* of succession is no doubt very strange, but all facts are strange. Why is this any stranger than the others? If someone suggests to such a thinker that something, an act of existing coming from non-existence, is a contradiction, he scorns the idea. This attempt to demonstrate the principle of sufficient reason begs the question. Why should a bare essence (in itself nothing) come from anything? or have a reason? It just comes. That is all. The task of science is merely to describe and to predict. It is never to explain. To ask the question *why* is to fall into meaningless, metaphysical tautologies. One essence cannot be explained by *another*. This is a contradiction. Each is just what it is. If you like, the essence P is explained by the essence P. No further explanation is possible. Unless existence is focused, this trend of essentialist thought is inevitable. The order of being is not clearly distinguished from the order of knowing, and metaphysics is reduced to logic, which becomes the central philosophic discipline. The act of existing is either ignored altogether, or, as in Hume,[8] identified with a clear and distinct essence or impression. Being is reduced to a discrete dust of essences which either lie side by side, or succeed one another in time. This essentialist pattern of thought has received divergent formulations in the West, but each of them gives us a world of static fixity in which nothing really moves or acts of itself.

In general, essence is that principle in a thing which determines it and marks it off from others. Existence is what separates it from nothing, and allies it to other existents. When we ask the question τί ἐστιν?, *what is it?* the answer must be given in terms of essence. When we ask *whether it is*, the answer is in terms of existence. Let us see if we can clarify the distinction between the two by contrasting them as they appear first in the static order resulting from a momentary cross-section of the universe, second in the temporal order, and finally in the order of knowing.

In the static order, essence is what limits existence to this or that of a certain kind. There is nothing about existence as such

[8] Hume, *Treatise*, Part II, Sec. 6.

which requires that it be restricted in this way. Essence limits and contracts. Existence realizes essence—completing or fulfilling it in a certain way. Essence separates one thing from another. Existence unites.

Turning now to the dynamic order, we find that essences are timeless and fixed. Each is simply what it is at one time as much as another. Change is irrelevant. Logical terms and principles are tenseless. But *being*, the term for existence, falls into tenses. Existence comes and goes. There is nothing about existence that pins it down to one essence alone. It may belong to one or to another, and thus may mediate between them. Hence it is the principle to which we must ultimately trace the dynamism of experience. Furthermore essences do not diffuse themselves and tend to anything beyond what they are. The number two as such does not tend to the number three. It remains just what it is. Hence, if the data show tendency, activity, or any mode of diffusiveness, this must be attributed to existence rather than to essence.

Turning now to the order of knowledge, we find differences which are equally striking. The essential quiddity or form of anything which marks it off from others, is far more easily grasped by the human intellect than the indeterminate act of existing which in itself possesses no *what*, but which may be given to essences of radically different types. This is connected with another sharp difference. We can readily grasp essence without existence. Any single concept in fact does just this. But existence cannot be grasped without also apprehending an essence of some kind. If I am to think of existence, I must think of something (an essence) in the act of existing.

As a result of these differences, there has been a strongly marked tendency in the East[4] toward a type of philosophy which slurs over essence, or confuses it with the vaguer datum of existence pervading all things and binding them into an all-encompassing unity. This is balanced by an opposite tendency of Western philosophy, which either passes over existence altogether or confuses it with fixed essences which are more readily understood. This essentialist mode of thought cannot account for active tendency.

But the metaphysical protocols of experience clearly manifest such active tendency. I am directly presented with such tendencies in my being, and wherever I turn, I find that they are either

[4] Cf. *Essays in East-West Philosophy*, Univ. of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, 1951, pp. 249–271.

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opposed or supported by alien tendencies arising in things outside of me. An essentialist ontology cannot account for this dynamism of nature. Something has been suppressed and sometimes completely lost from view. This is the act of existing. An essence is an intelligible determination which limits and restricts. But without existence it is a mere possibility, really nothing. An essence by itself does nothing and is nothing. Not to act is not to exist. To be is to be in act.

This truth has been implicit in the tradition of realistic philosophy since the time of Plato, who actually suggested the definition we have just given in the *Sophist*.[5] But it has been obscured by the suppression of existence as against essence, and by a resulting failure to recognize active tendency as a third *ontological principle* correlated with essence and existence, and necessarily constitutive of any finite being. This thesis is confirmed by all the data to which we have access at the macroscopic level of everyday experience, where we never find abstract properties but always *dispositional* properties tending to act in certain ways. It is now also confirmed by recent evidence concerning the nature of microscopic and sub-microscopic entities. The Cartesian idea of an inert matter incapable of action unless externally pushed or pulled, has now passed into eclipse. Physical reality is no longer statically conceived as tiny billiard balls, but rather dynamically as fields of force or energy.

No doubt these tendential centers require external support. But they tend to act of themselves. It is understandable therefore that recent philosophy should be characterized by a marked emphasis on the active dynamism of nature, and on such key concepts as creative evolution, emergent evolution, the creativity of Whitehead, and the creative freedom of Sartrian existentialism. According to this view, which I shall call *creationism*, finite entities are able to act creatively in the production of radically novel being completely discontinuous with what has gone before. In my opinion this theory is closer to the truth than the opposite extreme, which I shall call *receptionism*, against which it is in part a reaction. But each of these extreme views is subject to certain difficulties which indicate that the truth lies in between. I shall now try to clarify this intermediate position by a brief criticism of these two opposed alternatives.

Unlike the extreme essentialist, the creationist is not prepared to abandon the principle of sufficient reason; he will not allow logical manipulations to distract him from asking the question

[5] Plato, *Sophist*, 247 D–E.

why. Essences alone are clearly insufficient to account for the coming and going of essences. What will account for this coming and going? Within himself he directly feels tendencies forcing their way towards action on external things. He directly feels other tendencies in these things, either supporting or frustrating him.

Rightly recognizing such activity as present everywhere, he sets it up as an ontological principle required to account for the ubiquitous dynamism of nature. But he does not see that this must lead him to abandon the notion of *finished fact*. Such fact is supposedly just what it is. Existence is not clearly seen as a distinct coördinate factor *within* this fact. Activity is viewed as a separate force which, once aroused, moves in from the outside first to annihilate the fact, and then to create another new essence in its place. These are radical novelties absolutely discontinuous with what preceded them. To act is to create something new *ex nihilo*.

I believe that this view is close to the truth, far closer than its opposite, the receptionist view. But I think it is subject to certain weaknesses which make it incapable of withstanding a careful examination. The chief weakness is this.

The active tendencies of a finite being are derived from its act of existing which, abstractly considered, is indeterminate. But this act of existing is determined by the essence which exists. The active tendencies of the entity are similarly limited. They are tendencies of *a certain kind*. They can produce results of a *similar* nature, but not "creative" results completely divorced from the nature of the entity.

This ontological analysis is also borne out by the facts of experience which show that similar entities act in similar ways. Otherwise induction and science would be impossible. Purely creative action is not fit for a finite being.

Since the creationist theory does not agree with basic ontological data, nor with the data of any restricted science, I suggest that as empiricists we should abandon it. But this does not mean that we must accept the receptionist theory of the later Aristotelian tradition.

This tradition recognizes the composite, ontological structure of a finite entity as constituted by a fixed essence and an act of existing. But this act is often viewed in an essentialist manner as though it were fully finished and unable to act of itself. The law of sufficient reason is sometimes used (as by Gredt) to eliminate spontaneous tendency in a finite agent. Thus it is held to be contradictory for a finite entity determined essentially as x, and therefore not $-x^1$, to move actively to x^1. Such activity must not

merely be sustained but actually inserted into the thing from an outside source.[6] Finite entities are thus frozen into a state of intrinsic immobility. Hence the theory of premotion of the human will which has led certain schools of Thomist thought to a most diluted view of human freedom.[7] If consistently developed, the theory would seem to imply a denial of intrinsic spontaneity in finite agents very close to occasionalism.

We may reduce this receptionist view to two component theses: (1) no spontaneous act is performed in the agent of itself, but has to be inserted from the outside; and (2) no finite entity can of itself produce any new determination; at best it can only endure, and preserve its preceding state. Neither of these theses is confirmed by sound ontological analysis, nor by the empirical facts.

(1) The supposed ruling out of spontaneous action by reference to the principle of sufficient reason is based upon a tacit identification of existence with essence. For one essence, x (let us say greenness), of itself to tend or move towards another, x^1 (let us say redness), is of course a contradiction—impossible. Essences do not act nor tend. But in each finite entity there is another existential principle which is diffusive and expansive. This act of existing is a sufficient ground for spontaneous tendencies towards further being. In fact such tendencies are directly felt in ourselves, and in many other entities which sustain or oppose our activities. They must be inferred as universally present in things to account for induction and the so-called laws of nature. To suppose that before I perform my acts they have to be inserted from the outside into an inert substance is to multiply entities without necessity.

(2) The first act of existing is a separation from nothing. Furthermore it is not restricted to the limits of any finite essence. Hence as soon as it unites with such an essence, it transcends these limits and tends toward further, novel being. Active tendency is more than the fixed property or *quality* with which it is often identified in the Aristotelian tradition.[8] An existence completely restricted by its essence, and unable to diffuse itself by action, would be indistinguishable from an abstract essence, a pure possibility, timeless and self-enclosed. It would be a non-existent existence, quite impossible.

This objection is also borne out by factual evidence. Every being we know not only preserves its own being, but constantly

[6] Cf. Gredt, *Elementa Philosophiae Aristotelico-Thomisticae*, Herder, 1926, II, pp. 242–243.

[7] *Ibid.*, pp. 255 ff.

[8] *Ibid.*, pp. 155–156.

tends towards further new determinations not in existence before. Inorganic things move to new positions; plants grow; desire moves animals to new satisfactions; and men pass on to further decisions and acts. The nouns by which we express essence are timeless. But the verb *to be* and the other verbs which express modes of existing are tensed. The world of nature is existential and historical. To be is to be in act, and this is to be active.

This receptionist theory also fails to agree with the data. It must be modified in two essential respects.

(1) Active tendency is a *third* metaphysical principle coordinate with essence and existence, which necessarily results from them, and enters into the constitution of any finite being. It is not the same as essence because it acts. It is not the same as existence because it presupposes something already existing which it tends to complete in fitting ways. It is not the same as this preexistent entity, constituted by essence and existence, because it expands beyond towards further being not yet achieved. Existence is *primarily* responsible for this diffusive tendency, and is closely similar to it. As *existing* separates something from nothing, and gives it the act it can share in common with others, so *activity* separates something from privation, and actually links it with others, either by passion or action. Thus existence is best understood as the source of activity, the first *act*. Existence is to nothingness as activity is to inaction. To be is to be in act, and for any finite entity to be in act is to tend towards further existence.

(2) It follows from this that tendency in this sense cannot be restricted to a single, univocal category, as in certain branches of the Aristotelian and Thomistic tradition.[9] The phenomena are too diverse to be brought under a concept with the same generic meaning. The magnet, the growing plant, the sensing animal, and the reflecting man are not all active in the same sense. This does not mean, however, that the term is equivocal. Like other ontological terms, including essence and existence, it is analogous in logical structure, and can be understood only by a proportional similarity. The attractive force of the magnet is to the magnet as growth is to the plant, sensing to the animal, and reflection to the man.

[9] Thus Gredt, following John of St. Thomas, defines *potentia* (which we have called tendency) as "an accident disposing the subject to operating or resisting," Vol. II, p. 155. He classifies this as a *species* of the univocal genus *quality*, and includes under it such diverse *tendencies* as nutrition, organic growth, intellectual, and voluntary power (p. 156).

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The essence of a thing separates and isolates it from other existences. By its existence it is allied to them. Activity is the gaining of further existence. By its activities a finite entity emerges from its isolation, and enters into relation with other beings, either passively receiving those influences to which it is actively *open*, or acting upon them in ways ultimately determined by its nature. All finite tendencies are *partly* passive. At the very least, they must be sustained. In addition, they are in part deflected by other alien tendencies.

There is no such thing as a *purely* passive or receptive entity. Here the creationist view is correct. But neither is any finite action *purely* active or creative. At best it achieves more being, *yes*, but more being *fit for its essence*. Each finite entity, by its act of existing, transcends itself and tends towards further existence beyond what it already is. The tradition has been wrong in attempting to reduce this active tendency to the univocal categories of action and passion. It is rather a more pervasive structure like potency, act, and motion, which run through different categories and must be analogously understood. Existence is necessarily diffusive. No finite entity can exist without expanding to further existence.

The observed facts are certainly in accordance with the theory we have defended. Wherever essence, or structure, is given concrete existence, it is found to be active and tendential. When the specific form is vague and thin (as in inorganic entities) the action is random and passively determined to a large degree from the outside. When it is definite and rich with intrinsic determinations, the action is more stable and immanent. When a vast profusion of rationally purified forms are cognitively present and open to flexible rearrangement, a new level of free spontaneity is attained. Even here, at the level of man, action is never creative, but limited by human nature. If it is to be justifiable and fitting, it must be in agreement with the human essence. "Creative action" which proceeds without regard to the moral law of nature, leads only to frustration and destruction.

3. Ontology and Ethics

I shall now attempt to show very briefly that such an analysis as we have suggested is capable of shedding light on the fundamental categories of ethics, and of bringing supposedly discordant concepts into a meaningful unity. Let us begin with value and existence. From an essentialist point of view which regards existence as something fixed and finished, value is something else,

quite separate. Value is what *ought to be.* And the *ought* implies a certain futurity and tension which cannot belong to a finished fact. Hence value is thought of as a peculiar kind of quality or property dwelling in its own realm apart from actual existence. But if value is separated from existence completely, how can it be anything at all? Surely there is some relation between the two. What is this?

Our analysis suggests a reasonable answer to this fundamental question. Existence, as we have seen, is tendential. Value is the fulfilment of existential tendency. It is true that it cannot be identified with any finished fact, except in so far as this includes fulfilment. But in the concrete, no facts are ever finished. They are incomplete and tendential. Hence the sense of futurity and tension that attaches to the *ought.*

How then is value related to that which exists at a given moment? That towards which an entity is essentially tending, which will realize its nature, is good for it. This is the relation of *fitness.* By value, we mean what is fit for a thing, what is due to its nature, the further existence that will complete its basic tendencies, and its incidental tendencies as well, so far as these do not conflict with the former.

Can value then be deduced from fact? If by deduction we mean the tautology of modern logic, the answer is of course *no.* The fitting fulfilment of a tendency is not the same as its incipient stages. A synthetic connection is involved. But if we mean by *synthetic,* two separate items which merely succeed each other in time with no real bond between, the answer to this again is *no.* We cannot apprehend an incipient tendency with any degree of clarity without understanding something of the *gestalt* determining it, and its fitting fulfilment. Thus a biologist cannot observe a fossil skeleton without understanding something of the fitting activities required to complete its tendencies, the requisite environment, etc.

The tendency is not an atomic essence which we first understand by itself alone, and from which we then "infer" the completion as another separate entity. It is rather a relational activity which is either grasped all together with some degree of clarity or not at all. In apprehending a relation we must apprehend something of its terms; so in apprehending a tendency we must grasp something of what it is tending towards. Thus values are rightly said to be *founded on facts.*

Does this mean that value is to be identified with all existence, and that what is, is right? By no means. Existence is tendential. This tendency may proceed in a fitting manner towards its natural

fulfilment. The entity is then said to be in a sound or correct condition. On the other hand, it may be warped and impeded, and still go on existing. Such existence is said to be unsound and incorrect. Goodness, therefore, is not to be identified with any existent fact cut off from the future, nor with a non-existent property cut off from all existence. It is an existential fulfilment, fit for and thus founded on the essence and its essential tendencies.

Let us now turn to goodness and oughtness, which are also commonly separated by contemporary schools of ethics. Thus goodness is held to be an object of cognition with no binding power, while oughtness is a subjectively felt, compulsive tendency to act. Hence they are divorced, as though they were fixed essences like greenness and blueness, as though goodness ought not to be achieved, and as though doing what I ought to do were not good. Surely this is absurd. What then is the relation between the two?

The essential needs or tendencies of human nature may be objectively understood, together with the fitting values or realizations founded upon them. From these values, certain modes of required action may then be strictly deduced and stated in the moral law of nature. In a given situation, I may see that such an act is possible for me. I will then experience that peculiar union of rational insight into the tendential nature of man and the law founded on this nature, together with a subjectively felt tendency (for I myself am human) which constitutes what we call an obligation. If I have ever paid any attention to the factual tendencies of human nature I must feel something of this sort. If I do not feel it in a given instance, either my analysis of the tendency is wrong, or I do not understand myself.

From this basic ontological point of view, I am not forced to reduce oughtness to goodness, goodness to oughtness, or goodness to existence. Neither am I forced to separate them into isolated, atomic compartments. They may be fitted together as existential categories into a meaningful structure that corresponds with the data of moral experience. But this will require the abandonment of essentialist prejudices very dear to the modern mind.

The first of these is the doctrine that value, if it is anything at all, must be a peculiar quality or property. Such a view must lead either to a reductionist ethics like hedonism and utilitarianism, a chaotic view like recent moral pluralism so-called, or a flight to ineffability like that of G. E. Moore and the so-called intuitionists. These are striking examples of the terrible price that must be paid for the neglect of first philosophy. Basic concepts like goodness and rightness can be clarified *only* by ontological anal-

ysis. Unless they are so illumined, they will either be reduced and distorted, or fade into unintelligibility.

This is not only true of the foundational concepts of ethics but of those of the other disciplines as well. Philosophic data are more pervasive, and richer, than the abstract data of any of the more restricted sciences. Hence the attempt to squeeze these data, with all their variegated content, into the limited perspectives of one science, or even of all the quantitative sciences, must always lead to reductive distortion of data, chaos, or unintelligibility.

The broad concepts of ontology alone are capable of opening up perspectives which can take account of all the immediate data of experience without incoherence. It is our primary duty at the present time to keep this perspective open, first of all by phenomenological description, then by careful analysis of those ontological data which are inaccessible to the restricted methods of what we now call *science,* and finally by the formulation of explanatory hypotheses which can be checked by these data. Unless we perform these arduous functions in a disciplined manner, authentic empiricism will vanish, to be replaced, as it is now being replaced, by linguistic analysis, or as it has already been replaced in many quarters, by a spurious, so-called *empiricism* which is only a deceptive disguise for a bigoted *a priori* dogmatism. Metaphysics is the foundational empirical discipline—the empirical science *par excellence.*

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COMMENTS AND CRITICISM

MORE ON PROFESSOR PEPPER'S THEORY OF THE AESTHETIC OBJECT

In the Supplementary Essay to *The Basis of Criticism in the Arts* and in a recent reply to certain criticisms,[1] Stephen Pepper has been working toward an adequate description of the object of critical evaluation. Because I agree with Professor Pepper that the subject is an important one and because like him I am not sure that his characterization is yet entirely satisfactory, I venture to continue the discussion by putting two or three questions and by briefly explaining the difficulties from which they arise.

The problem is, "What is a work of art?" Professor Pepper's desire is, I believe, to take sufficient account of perceptual experience without falling into that anarchic subjectivism which says,

[1] Stephen Pepper, "Further Consideration of the Aesthetic Work of Art," this JOURNAL, Vol. XLIX, No. 8, April 10, 1952, pp. 274–279.

"Since my experience and yours are necessarily different, we will always be talking about different things." Pepper asks us to distinguish between the *physical* and the *aesthetic* work of art. The first is "a set of physical stimuli, ordinarily a physical continuant like canvas and pigments for a picture, or a printed page for a poem." The aesthetic work of art, that object of critical evaluation for which we are searching, turns out to be an ideal construct; in effect it is what the normal critic—to use the concept effectively employed in Pepper's *Aesthetic Quality*—can reasonably attribute in the way of dispositional properties to the physical work of art.

These are my questions: (1) Is not the fairly sharp distinction between physical work of art and aesthetic work of art likely to be misleading in the case of "temporal" art objects? (2) Can in fact the object of an actual instance of critical evaluation be an ideal construct? (3) In the case of apparently irreconcilable interpretations of a work, how does a collection of such interpretations function as the common object of criticism? I will expand the questions only briefly.

(1) The physical work of art, we are told, is (at least ordinarily) a physical continuant like pigments on canvas or a printed page. But the printed page, however well it serves our need for a continuant, has, as Professor Pepper notices at some length in the Supplementary Essay, a rather strikingly different relation to the beholder's aesthetic experience from that of the painted canvas. In so far as the oral aspect of poetry is essential, we can say that the printed words like the musical score are directions for making sounds in somewhat the same way that the choreographer's symbols are directions for making movements; these sounds and these movements are what function as stimuli for an aesthetic perception in the consumer. Now suppose a reading of a poem or a playing of a sonata to be captured on a phonograph record and an execution of a dance to be filmed: we have a new sort of continuant and one in some ways a better analogue to the painted canvas than the marked paper. Yet once we start thinking of some repeatable performance of a temporal work of art as our physical work of art, we may become somewhat uneasy about its distinction from the aesthetic work of art, which is said to be, on one approach, "the mature, funded perception of an experienced spectator . . . ." Take, for instance, a recording of Horowitz' playing of a Scarlatti sonata. It is not a perception, of course, but it is certainly the registration of a performance based on a "mature, funded perception of an experienced spectator . . . ." I might say to the unfriendly critic of Scarlatti that until he has

heard Horowitz' interpretation he has not heard the "real thing" and that thus in an important way his evaluation is wrongly directed.

All of this (and much more of a similar kind) Professor Pepper knows, but as his basic distinction gets summarized, even by himself, there is a strong temptation to reduce the arts which require performance and interpretation and which therefore embody in their physical materials the results of a perception other than that of the original creator, to the condition of painting or sculpture.

It seems to me perfectly sensible to discuss the physical materials of the arts: tones, vocables, pigments, stone, etc.; and to insist (against Plato, say) upon their indispensability to the artistic enterprise. And the subject of continuants is surely a legitimate one, for instance in distinguishing musical improvisations from notated compositions. Again, the role of the beholder requires much elucidation, and here Professor Pepper's concept of "funding" is an excellent contribution to aesthetic theory. But I'm not sure but what the distinction between physical work of art and aesthetic work of art causes more trouble than it is worth. "Aesthetic work of art" sounds like a redundancy; "physical work of art" like an impossibility.

(2) Of course any proper critic ought to be sufficiently humble to allow for the possibility and sometimes even for the great likelihood that his own perception has not exhausted the potentialities of a work of art, but I am puzzled to understand how the ordinary, particular critical observations are about anything other than what the critic has come to regard, to perceive, as the work of art. In the case of critics differing in evaluation, each will so far as he is conscientious endeavor to emend his own perceptions by tracking down the clues afforded by the others. And it is possible to describe various interpretations of an art work. But surely in the usual case, "the aesthetic work of art as the object of critical evaluation" will be the content of some one aesthetic experience or will be that about the object which some critic believes to be necessary for the evocation of an experience such as he has had. And to the extent that this is so, is it not misleading to speak of the object of critical evaluation as an ideal construct?

(3) My final question is similar to the second. Mr. Pepper writes, "There may be several equally relevant interpretations of a given work." His reassurance is, "This complicates the description of the aesthetic work of art but does not render it self-contradictory." Let us suppose rival critics to make out their cases for two "incompatible" but relevant interpretations for a "given" work of art. That is, up to a point they agree about a

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common object of their criticism; past that point they disagree. A third critic may then, as it were, *collect* the rival interpretations and regard the collection as the aesthetic work of art. So doing he may himself want to criticize this ambiguous object, perhaps as "confused," perhaps as "rich." But, I should think more typically, he may want to criticize the work as defined by one of the interpretations or a new one of his own; in which case the object of his criticism will *not* be the collection. This, even though he admit the relevance of another interpretation, say by such characteristic words as, "Oh yes, I see how you *might* look at it that way."

My remarks under (2) and (3) can now be combined into this question: In construing "object of critical evaluation" as a construct or a collection, is there not a danger of misunderstanding *what* it is that a particular critic is likely to be criticizing?

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BOOK REVIEWS

John Dewey. The Reconstruction of the Democratic Life. JEROME NATHANSON. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons. 1951. ix, 127 pp. (Twentieth Century Library.) $2.00.

Readers who have followed the appearance of the volumes comprising the Twentieth Century Library, sponsored by Charles Scribner's Sons, are acquainted with the high degree of excellence which characterizes the work of the authors. Books on James Joyce, Charles Darwin, Einstein, George Bernard Shaw, Dostoevsky, William James, and Freud, each written by an outstanding authority, have already been published and constitute a series which scholars and intelligent laymen alike can ill afford to overlook.

Jerome Nathanson's book on John Dewey is the latest member of the series and in every way measures up to the standard set by the preceding volumes. Within the confines of relatively few pages, the author brings the whole range of Dewey's philosophy into focus and makes its basic ideas stand out conspicuously. And because the author's own thinking is so fully in accord with that which he is expounding, the account he gives is more faithful to Dewey's actual teaching than perhaps might otherwise have been possible.

The reader's understanding of Dewey's philosophy is aided by the author's treatment of certain misconceptions regarding it. He points out, for example, the error of those who hold that this philosophy by insisting upon the "practical" nature and function

of ideas is materialistic and loses sight of the higher values. "Knowledge is practical to be sure, but its aim is no cheap 'practicality'" (p. 48). Rather, knowledge seeks to make secure all values and especially those which give life its highest spiritual and uniquely human character, the values which inhere, for example, in worthwhile human relationships and aesthetic experiences. The author also singles out for criticism the charge that Dewey has failed in his doctrine of human nature to take into account the ideas introduced into psychology by Freud. The fact is, he says, that Dewey's doctrine contains the truths of Freud's doctrine but these are stated by Dewey in other terms. Whereas Freud appeals to an "unconscious" to explain our unthinking and unconscious behavior, Dewey, following James, appeals to habit. "When we think of the matter in this way," says the author, "James helps us to understand the biological and Dewey the social basis of 'the unconscious,' as Freud gives us masterly perceptions of some of the internal, private implications of their work" (p. 70).

Perhaps if more space had been available the author would have shown more concretely the many areas of thought and practice in which the impact of Dewey's thought has been felt. And perhaps with more space at his command he would have pointed out in more detail that, on its academic side, the success of Dewey's philosophy consists not so much in the solution of problems which have traditionally engaged the attention of philosophers as in rendering these problems meaningless and undeserving of serious consideration.

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Social Behavior and Personality. Contributions of W. I. Thomas to Theory and Social Research. Edited by Edmund H. Volkart. New York: Social Science Research Council. 1951. ix, 338 pp. $3.00.

William Isaac Thomas (1863–1947) was one of the men associated with the "Chicago school" of functional behavioristic psychology, instrumental philosophy, and situational sociology, and their interrelation into an empirical social science. Among his associates were John Dewey, George H. Mead, Albion W. Small, Thorstein Veblen, and many others. Thomas was an able investigator and a competent critic, whose very successes have tended to obscure the full range and stature of his contributions. His *Source Book for Social Origins,* published in 1909, was one of the most influential texts of its period; to many students, this one work represented the climactic achievement of Thomas' career. To other students, Thomas was the senior author (with Florian Znaniecki)

of that model study of *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America* (1918–20). Others knew him only by his later work (with his wife, Dorothy Swaine Thomas) on *The Child in America* (1928). Few students knew the seven books and nearly forty articles and reports which represent Thomas' life work. Even fewer had studied these works with sufficient care and attention to note that a strong interest in the nature and methodology of social science underlay them all, and that the expression of this interest revealed the progressive modification and development in Thomas' mind of a theory of social research.

This volume of theoretical essays and selections from Thomas' larger works should go far to correct the prevalent one-sided views of his work. It is to the credit of the editor, Edmund H. Volkart of Yale, and of his editorial committee that the work was done and well done. The editor's introduction, "Social Behavior and the Defined Situation," attempts a brief integration of Thomas' ideas in terms of the concept of the "definition of the situation," which was Thomas' last in a series of basic interpretational concepts. It is Volkart's conclusion that "In retrospect, Thomas looms as more than a historical figure of importance. . . . Thomas' abiding concern was with the timeless problems of science as these are manifest in the realm of social behavior: the nature of the phenomena being studied, their conceptualization, and the methods appropriate to their analysis. To the extent that he clarified these problems and pointed the way to their solution, he has become a part of the culture of social science itself. He helped to define the scientific situation" (pp. 31–32).

The reader of these essays will find many passages which parallel closely discussions in the writings of other members of the Chicago school. I do not mean here to suggest that Thomas' statements are derivative, nor that they are the source from which Dewey, Mead, or Small derived their ideas. Rather these men formulated their ideas in such close communion that it is never clear whether any single one of them can be considered the originator. They formed a "school" in which philosophers, social scientists, and biological scientists worked in close relations. The philosophers developed sociobiologistic philosophies, the social scientists developed instrumental and pragmatic sociologies, theories of politics, and economic theories, and the biological scientists worked out behavioristic zoologies as well as functional psychologies. When Thomas said, "The meaning of the foodstuff is its reference to its eventual consumption; that of an instrument, its reference to the work for which it is designed" (p. 50), his pragmatic definition of meaning is like that of Mead, when he wrote "The clenched fist means the blow."

The conception that Thomas made central to his analysis of personality and society was that of "definition of the situation." Now "habit is a definition of a situation" (p. 199). A habit system (in this Thomas' thinking is very close to that of Peirce) is a structuring of response to the meaning of a defined situation. The habit system may be that of an individual; it may be that of a society ("a body of collective habit"). In addition to habit systems, there are also "stimulus systems" both of the habit system and the stimulus system. Individuation (note again the similarity to Mead's theory of the emergence of the "self") "means that the habit system of the group is not changing as fast as the stimulus systems of the individual" (p. 199). This is the characteristic pattern of our society ("where the evolution of the stimuli systems is more rapid than the evolution of the habit systems"); there are "a number of types of the behavior reactions to the habit system." The habit system, then, is the repository of definitions of situations; the stimulus system is composed of the problem areas to which the individual, somehow working within, or in relation to, the individual and social habit systems, must adapt his behavior. The study of this behavior in order to obtain verifiable generalizations useful for future control is the goal of social science.

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Marsilius of Padua: The Defender of Peace. Vol. I: *Marsilius of Padua and Medieval Political Philosophy.* ALAN GEWIRTH. (Records of Civilization, Sources and Studies. No. XLVI.) New York: Columbia University Press. 1951. xvi, 342 pp. $4.75.

This introduction to Marsilius is also an excellent introduction to mediaeval political philosophy at large. Professor Gewirth carefully analyzes Marsilius' leading concepts and arguments in relation to those of his contemporaries and predecessors. Since we cannot always be sure that Marsilius' erudition was as extensive and lucid as Professor Gewirth's, what emerges from this analysis is perhaps less an exposition of the *Defensor Pacis* itself than a setting forth of the range of implications its doctrines acquire when surrounded by much of the mediaeval and some of the classical political discussion.

Where scholarly appeal to Marsilius' concepts and arguments would be indecisive, the breadth of this range is most easily cut down in two ways. One way is by considering "the institutional setting" of the *Defensor Pacis,* and Professor Gewirth notices under this heading significant affinities between Marsilius' doc-

trines and the political and commercial situation in Padua and elsewhere. The other way is by considering the acceptability of Marsilius' doctrines to Ludwig of Bavaria. Although Professor Gewirth does acknowledge that "the interest of Marsilius' career with Ludwig lies in the light it throws upon the former's practical interpretation of the meaning of his treatise," he seems reluctant to concede that this emperor's policies hardly implemented a republicanism as democratic in its implications as he finds Marsilius' theory. Instead of making this concession, Professor Gewirth urges that the change in recent scholarly interpretations of Marsilius, whereby "he has passed from being a 'democrat' to being a 'totalitarian,'" has largely been the result of finding affinities between his theory and ideas of Rousseau which have lately undergone re-estimation in reaction to recent political developments. When scholars incorporate such reactions in their interpretations of political theories, they seem to be assuming that later political developments draw out the implications of a theory and remove its initial ambiguities. Professor Gewirth's approach is subtler and more drastic. He recognizes, on the one hand, that it takes a political theory to draw out the implications of specific political developments, but assumes, on the other hand, that the general significance of a political theory can be determined with respect to "the nature of the political situation as such," so that reference to any specific development, whether later than or contemporary with the theorist, can ultimately be discounted in interpreting his theory. Professor Gewirth makes this assumption with the feeling that previous scholars "have too frequently obscured the essential content and contribution of the Marsilian politics" not only "by an overeagerness to find in his work anticipations of favored modern developments," but also "by entering into the same polemic in which he himself engaged."

I do not think, however, that the adoption of this assumption provides, in the particular case of Marsilius, an approach which is an adequate alternative to either of these other two approaches. Marsilius' concern with "the nature of the political situation as such" almost inevitably seems rudimentary, since he attempts to restrict the general scope of previous mediaeval and classical theories and yet remains dependent on these sources for his formulations. Since Marsilius makes this attempt in order to restrict in practice the scope of papal pretensions, "the essential content of the Marsilian politics" would almost necessarily remain obscure without some reference to his polemical preoccupation with this specific political problem, to which (as Professor Gewirth abundantly illustrates) Marsilius finds all more general political prob-

lems merely tangential. Marsilius' solution to this problem seems to me to receive an unmistakable interpretation in Ludwig's policies. There are political philosophies which solicit interpretation in terms of "the nature of the political situation as such." Thus it may be that implications can be found in the case of Plato's political philosophy which are not exposed by his Sicilian expedition in the same sense that Athens' Sicilian expedition exposed the implications of her practical policies. But it would be difficult to read into the *Defensor Pacis* any firm distinction between the theory of politics and a practical political program or any theoretical dissatisfaction with the specific practical policies of Ludwig's Italian expedition.

At the time it is difficult to generalize the significance of Marsilius' attempt to restrict the scope of mediaeval political theory and of papal practices without some reference to later theoretical formulations which are less directly dependent than Marsilius' on mediaeval and classical sources. If such anticipations are allowed, Marsilius' theory does attain a certain relative generality by its affinities to some modern treatments of similar problems. Professor Gewirth emphasizes that one's attitude towards Marsilius, in his opposition to most of mediaeval political theory, "must reflect one's attitude towards some of the most pervasive aspects of modern times," in as much as the "outcome" of his opposition—"viewed in the sense not so much of direct causal influence as of the conception of man and society which it exhibited—was the modern world." Even if the modern world is less homogeneous in its conception of man and of society than it may be necessary to assume in undertaking such comparisons, and even if the conception represents no more completely in our case than in Marsilius' a concern with "the nature of the political situation as such," Professor Gewirth's exposition of Marsilius should be useful as an introduction to modern as well as to mediaeval political theory, since it is the examination of modern ideas "in a strategic juncture with the ideas they superseded." In the minds of most scholars, Marsilius has long since dislodged Machiavelli from his traditional place at the beginning of the history of modern political theory. When Professor Gewirth's second volume, which will contain an English translation of the *Defensor Pacis*, is available, Marsilius can also dislodge Machiavelli from his place at the beginning of college courses that trace this history. For there is no exposition of Machiavelli which illustrates with such adequacy of sifted detail, as the exposition of Marsilius in this first volume, what is implied in the transition from mediaeval to modern po-

litical theory, and thus what is implicitly "modern" in our reactions to mediaeval political theory.

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Aristotle: The Nicomachean Ethics. A Commentary by the late H. H. JOACHIM. Edited by D. A. Rees. Oxford: At the Clarendon Press. 1951. vi, 304 pp. $5.00.

In the Oxford of the early 20th century, Joachim exercised a powerful influence in combining the Aristotelian and Hegelian traditions. It is good to have his lectures on the *Nicomachean Ethics*—the medium through which Aristotelian exposition has been predominantly conveyed to Oxford undergraduates—put into print. The lectures were delivered during the years 1902 to 1917. They are rich in specific insights, in textual interpretation, and in bringing to bear upon critical passages the full power of a deep systematic knowledge of Aristotelian concepts.

Intended to guide student reading, the lectures naturally concentrate upon essential background and difficult passages, and skip over parts that tell their own story, but on which we should have very much liked Joachim's reflections. Thus there are only two pages on Book IV with its variety of moral virtues, and a comparatively brief treatment of Books VIII and IX on friendship and social relations. On the other hand, the intellectual virtues (Book VI) are dealt with at considerable length. And throughout, the major digressions deal with such topics as the categories, demonstration, the four causes, forms of change, which are essential for understanding Aristotle's ethical theory.

On the whole, Joachim's central interest lies in the logical and metaphysical aspects. This is clear from the very beginning when the introduction concerns itself at length with approaching ethics through Aristotle's classification of the sciences. Pertinent materials are provided occasionally also from Aristotle's psychology —for example, in analyzing the "irrational" part of the soul which is capable of obedience (p. 22). And there is ample use of structural materials from Greek society where it is necessary for understanding the text; for example, the discussion of justice in Book V is especially clarified by relation to Athenian legal forms. Comparatively little use, however, is made of Aristotle's *Politics* and the social issues that stand out clearly in it, for the illumination of the ethics. For example, the analysis of the "irrational" part of the soul referred to just above would be considerably deepened by seeing it not merely in the psychological terms of moral conflict, but also in the social terms of the desired relationship of women and slaves to lords and masters. Again,

Joachim takes Aristotle's description of the man of pride or dignity to be a humorous pointing up of that person's obviously exaggerated sense of importance. The more usual interpretation with greater plausibility sees it as a not unenthusiastic depiction of an upper class ideal.

The spirit of the commentary is one of unassuming but exacting scholarship. For example, Joachim says of one passage: "I do not know of any other possible interpretation of these words than the one which I have for years adopted: but I do not any longer feel so certain that it is correct as I used to. Hence I will put it forward as *apparently* the only possible one—but not as an interpretation with which I am satisfied" (p. 55). But where evidence exists it is marshalled forcefully: see for example, the light thrown on deliberation by considering the use of *ἀντί* (p. 98) or the meaning of *προ-* in *προαιρετόν* (p. 100). Every reader will no doubt find himself disappointed by the absence of commentary on some passage he regards as crucial or of special interest (for example, I would have liked more on the "equitable"); but it would be grasping to ask for too much rather than be grateful for what there is.

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Method in Metaphysics. ROBERT J. HENLE. Milwaukee: Marquette University Press. 1951. (The Aquinas Lecture, 1950.) vii, 73 pp. $2.00.

This Aquinas Lecture on the nature of metaphysical method makes four presuppositions, which are not regarded as "mere" assumptions by the Jesuit lecturer. The first two, explicitly stated in the lecture itself, are the validity of Thomistic existentialism in metaphysics and of Thomistic realism in epistemology. The other two, appearing in the notes, are the definition of metaphysics as "an independent science of being" (p. 59) and the distinction between scientific and philosophic method. Armed with the truth of these four presuppositions, Father Henle proceeds with impeccable logic to the analysis of the nature of knowledge in general as the prerequisite step to an understanding of metaphysical knowledge in particular.

The author's thesis might be put briefly thus: Just as an "operational continuity" of sense and intellect is necessary for all existential judgments about this or that item of reality, so a *continuatio* of the same diverse powers is necessary for all ontological judgments. In other words, negatively stated, both "extreme sensism" and "extreme rationalism" are wrong not only in

science but in metaphysics as well. Though metaphysics is like science in being inductive in origin—sensory experience being their common source of knowledge—its method differs from scientific induction in that it works through "insight" rather than by "inference."

Granting the author's insight into the difference between scientific and philosophic methodology, isn't there at the same time an "operational continuity" between them? If so, then it follows that metaphysics can't be an *independent* inquiry into being, as the Thomist conceives it, but rather must be defined as "*metaphysics*," that is, a discipline *dependent* in some sense on the sciences for its objective reference. Father Henle claims that science itself is unable to give us an understanding of "the substantial unity of a living organism" (p. 61). Perhaps so. But if biology can't help us here, where shall we poor philosophers turn? After all, the proper business of metaphysics is to *supplement* the work of the sciences, not *substitute* for it with principles attained "independently" of their methods. This supplementary function of metaphysics, to be sure, may hurt our professional pride for a while, but what we lose among ourselves is well compensated for in the long run by what we gain in the way of professional respect from others. In short, if science is no Sacred Cow, neither is philosophy!

WELLS COLLEGE P. ROMANELL

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